

Radon

What is radon?

- Radon is a colorless, odorless and tasteless gas that results from the radioactive decay (breakdown) of uranium and radium.
- It is naturally occurring in soil, rock and ground water.

Why is radon a concern?

- Radon is a known human carcinogen. It is the second leading cause of lung cancer.
- In Indiana, close to one in four homes tested was found to have elevated radon levels.
- Radon can seep from the ground into any building and expose humans to its dangers.
- Radon typically moves up through the ground to the air above and into a building through cracks, sump pumps, crawlspaces, construction joints, gaps around service pipes and other holes.
- Radon can also dissolve into well water and contribute to airborne radon in homes when released through running water.

How can I tell if radon is present in my home or building?

- A radon test in your home or building is the only way to know if radon is present and poses a threat.
- The type of radon test that should be used depends on the type of building and why the test is being performed.
- During real estate transactions and for large commercial or apartment buildings, most people choose a certified tester.
- The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) maintains a list of Indiana Certified Radon Testers at:
<http://www.IN.gov/isdh/regsvcs/radhealth/pdfs/radoncertifapp.pdf>.
- If you wish to test the radon levels in your home yourself, there are two basic options:
 - 1) purchase a radon home test kit from a local hardware store and follow the directions, or
 - 2) call a certified lab to purchase a test kit and follow the directions.
- The Indiana State Department of Health maintains a list of Indiana Certified Laboratories at
http://www.IN.gov/isdh/regsvcs/radhealth/pdfs/radon_lab_list.pdf.

What can be done to radon in homes or buildings?

- The most effective way to permanently reduce radon levels in a home or building is to install a radon mitigation system.
- Mitigation systems generally use the same technology but vary slightly for each building or home. Mitigation systems vary because the design depends on the specific conditions in the structure such as foundation type (slab, crawl space, and basement), structural obstacles, building use, size and other factors.
- For best results, be sure to have an Indiana Certified Mitigator install the radon reduction system in your home or building.
- The ISDH maintains a list of licensed radon mitigation contractors online at
<http://www.IN.gov/isdh/regsvcs/radhealth/radon.htm>.
- Be sure to test your home after the installation of a radon reduction system and re-test it every two years. Environmental and building conditions can change. It is important to monitor the system to ensure it is operating properly.
- If you are building a new home, ask your contractor to use radon resistant construction techniques. Learn more about these techniques at <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/radon/construc.html>.

For can I get more information?

- For additional information, contact the Indiana Department of Environmental Management Radon Hotline at (800) 272-9723.